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# QUARTER CENTURY OF THEATRE

This is jubilee year for Caravan Players -- the final year in a quarter century of the group's continuous activity in amateur theatre in Winnipeg.

Originally known as the Winnipeg Dramatic Society, the group was formed in 1941. As the Winnipeg Little Theatre, Eaton's Masquers Club and other older groups had either folded or confined themselves to presenting variety entertainment to the armed services, the Winnipeg Dramatic Society strove to provide a needed medium for the production of stage plays. The society is still strong and active, as Caravan Players conduct their business under the original name.

As a continuing theatre group, it is the oldest in Winnipeg and since its inception not a year has passed without one or more productions.

For a time the group remained small, but close-knit and enthusiastic. During the war years actresses overbalanced the membership. This meant a ceaseless search for plays with few men. The first production, Ladies in Retirement, had only one male actor, George Harris, who later became padre of the Canadian Parachute Battalions and was killed landing in the Normandy invasion. One of his last acts was to arrange for a deduction from his pay to be sent to the struggling young dramatic society.

The first plays were staged in the old Dominion Theatre, now the home of the Manitoba Theatre Centre. Later the Playhouse and Civic Auditorium were used, and many another place with any sort of stage in any part of the city.

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## QUARTER CENTURY OF THEATRE (Continued)

Early plays included Night Must Fall, Guest in the House, Play Parade, Claudia, Kiss and Tell, Papa is All, Three is a Family and many others. Players prominent in the first productions were Ethel Lloyd Jones, Doris Capelle, Lu Pateman, Kathleen Cheyne, Doris Benson and Gerry Burton.

The society opened its first permanent studio in the Cadomin Building at the corner of Main and Fort, with subsequent club rooms in the Syndicate and Montgomery Buildings, close to the corner of Portage and Main. Both these buildings have now been demolished. Gone, too, is Child's, popular sanctuary for long coffee sessions, discussions and debates. For a number of years, the present club rooms in the Empire Hotel have been a happy home with as many as three productions in rehearsal at the same time.

Besides presenting plays in the city, Caravan Players have toured rural Manitoba and Ontario, taking plays and other entertainment to towns and villages. The society also provided theatre for Winnipeg children before the larger and highly successful Children's Theatre of Winnipeg was organized. The group has also produced documentary plays for national and provincial conventions and welfare organizations. Shows have been staged for the Good Neighbors Club, the Institute for the Blind, Alcoholics Anonymous, Canadian Mental Health and many others.

Caravan Players pioneered in presenting Theatre in the Round to Winnipeg audiences, first at the Royal Alexandra Hotel, and then for several years at the club rooms.

Though reined in at times by short finances, the club has always managed to pay its debts and the players have carried on.

They will continue to carry on, for their strength has always been sincerity and the joy they bring to the task of creating theatre.

There is a place for amateur theatre in Winnipeg, in London and in New York -- everywhere. With its history of survival, hard-won experience and their pioneering spirit, Caravan Players will hold their place among the groups to fill that need.



**Will S. Dickson**

Founder of  
The Winnipeg Dramatic Society,  
now living in Montreal

## **THE DIRECTOR**

Gustaf Kristjanson has directed several plays for Caravan including " Gigi ", " Nude with Violin ", and " Country Wife ". Gus has worked with Winnipeg Little Theatre and The New Play Society in Toronto. He is Radio Drama Producer for CBC Prairie Region and during the last ten years has produced hundreds of radio plays.



Elizabeth Derwin was born in Yugo-Slavia and has been in Canada for the past eleven years. During this time Liz has appeared with the R.C.A.F., Drama Club and Venture Theatre. She has also done several radio shows.

Murray B. Senens is so well known to Winnipeg audiences, need we say more except this is his first role with Caravan and we hope the start for many future roles.



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# **CLERAMBARD**

by MARCEL AYME

English adaptation by Alvin Sapinsley and Leo Kerz  
Presented by special arrangement with Samuel French Ltd.

DIRECTED BY GUSTAF KRISTJANSON

## CAST

Vicomte Octave de Clerambard	Don Smeltzer
Comtesse Louise de Clerambard	Norma Harris
Madame de Lere	Betty Knight
Comte Hector de Clerambard	Robert Coates *
Priest	Graham Beatty
A Monk	Gustaf Kristjanson
The Flounder	Elizabeth Derwin
Madame Galuchon	Marion Neild
Evelyne Galuchon	Gloria Bubb
Etienette Galuchon	Joan McTavish
Brigitte Galuchon	Ilseferne Meloff
Eugene Galuchon	Murray B. Senens *
A Soldier	Gerry Walsh
A Doctor	Tom McEwen

\* Appear by permission of Actor's Equity Association

THE TIME - About 1910

## ACT ONE

### SCENE ONE

The Clerambard Living Room  
Evening

### SCENE TWO

The Same  
Following Afternoon

## INTERMISSION

## ACT TWO

### SCENE ONE

The Flounder's Room  
Late Afternoon

### SCENE TWO

Courtyard of the Mansion  
A Few Days Later

## **PRODUCTION STAFF**

Stage Manager ..... Rene Jamieson  
Technical Director..... Jack Rettie  
Lighting & Sound ..... Tom Saunders  
Costumes ..... Anthea Cammell and Shirley Wolechuk  
Properties ..... Naomi Globerman  
Script Assistants ..... Yvonne Sime, Margaret Brown and  
Joan Mc Tavish  
Sets Designed by GERRY WALSH  
Sets built by Gerry Cairns and Norm Williamson

## **THE PLAY**

This is the story of a miracle, of a man who attempts to live the life of a saint. The Comte de Clerambard and his family live in ancestral Mansion in utter destitution. Clerambard is a tyrant and drives his family to knit enough sweaters to eke out a pitiable existance. The great change occurs when the Comte is visited by a monk who speaks of St. Francis of Assisi. When the Comte tries to pattern himself on the saint his family thinks he is mad. But he decides even though there has been no miracle he will live his life as if it had actually happened.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

J. W. AUCTION

BEN MOSS JEWELLERS

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Cover design by J. Lawrence Jamieson



Robert Coates had extensive experience with amateur theatre in England before coming to Canada. Mr. Coates played the lead in our production of "Nude with Violin" and has also performed with MTC, notably in their presentation of "Waiting for Godot".

Norma Harris from the Emerald Isle - has also had extensive theatre experience. Her most notable performance in Winnipeg was as Mary Boyle in MTC's production of "Juno and the Paycock" and the CBC television presentation of the same play.



Don Smeltzer, the Vicomte Octave, arrived in the west recently from Dartmouth, N. S., where he appeared in several radio and teleproductions. Don has also done some Radio work in Vancouver. His most recent appearance in this city was with Venture Theatre in "Light Up the Sky".

## MARY SCORER



## BOOKS

214 KENNEDY STREET — WINNIPEG 1, MAN.  
PHONE WHitehall 3-2117

Betty Knight appearing as Mme. de Lere, hails from England. She is a veteran performer with Caravan and has also directed many shows for us. You may remember Betty in MTC's production of "The Boy Friend".

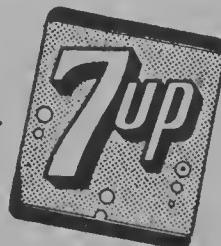


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